



**North Carolina
Department of Transportation**

Public Transportation Division
FY 2008 Annual Report

Spring 2009

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N.C. Public Transportation Systems

- Public transportation systems¹ – 99
 - Urban single-city systems – 15
 - Fixed route in small city systems – 3
 - Rural single-county systems – 68
 - Regional rural systems – 7
 - Regional urban systems – 2
 - Consolidated urban-rural systems – 4

Operating Statistics

Transit Systems

- Passenger trips² – 59.9 million
- Miles of revenue service² – 88.4 million
- Hours of revenue service² – 5.2 million

Light Rail System (*Initiated Nov. 26, 2007*)

- Passenger trips – 2.26 million
- Miles of revenue service – 347,707
- Hours of revenue service – 21,216

State Demographics

- Population of North Carolina³ – 8,869,861
- Citizens age 65 or older³ – 1,076,420 (+/- 1,299) 12.1% (+/- 0.1%)
- Households without personal vehicle³ – 224,721 (+/- 4,676) 6.5% (+/- 2.1%)
- Median household income³ – \$43,867 (+/- 225)
- Persons with a disability, age 5+³ – 1,354,481 (+/- 11,355) 21.1% (+/- 0.1%)
- Persons living below U.S. poverty level³ – 1,273,645 (+/- 18,256) 14.8% (+/- 1.4%)
- Social Security beneficiaries⁴ – 1,587,350

¹ As of July 1, 2008

² Unaudited FY 2008

³ 2005-2007 American Community Survey 3-year estimates for North Carolina as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau

⁴ OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2007

North Carolina's Future Rides on Transportation

Public Transportation Division Keeps the Wheels Turning



Miriam S. Perry
Director

Perhaps at no other time in recent history has the topic of public transportation taken center stage as it did during FY 2008. **More people were turning to public transit** at the very time legislative and citizen groups were studying ways to better serve the traveling public.

Fueled by high gas prices, growing numbers of commuters left their vehicle at home and rode public transit in FY 2008. **Ridership is growing;** take, for example, Triangle Transit and Charlotte Area Transit System. During June 2008, Triangle Transit's bus/shuttle ridership increased 30.2 percent over June 2007. CATS' ridership increased 96.3 percent between FY 1998 and FY 2008. The new light rail introduced in November 2007 played a major role in CATS' ridership increase as it exceeded projected first-year average daily ridership within days of its launch.

A few weeks before the light rail rollout, Charlotte-area voters defeated an initiative to repeal the region's public transit funding. **Citizens voted that they were willing to continue paying for transit choices** through the half-cent sales tax first approved in 1998. The success of Charlotte's light rail and record-breaking bus ridership figures throughout the state played backdrop to the work of the 21st Century Transportation Committee and the Special Transit Advisory Committee.

Created by the General Assembly, the **21st Century Transportation Committee** was charged to review the state's transportation and transportation finance policies and report back with final recommendations in 2009.

In the Triangle area, the **Special Transit Advisory Commission**, a citizen panel, unveiled its proposal for \$8.2 billion in bus, streetcar and rail transit investments by 2035.

While changes were being proposed for transit from both legislative- and citizen-led groups, a **transformation was taking place within NCDOT**. A number of organizational changes were made over an 18-month period to strengthen the department's operations and improve efficiency in delivering transportation projects across all modes.

All of North Carolina's 100 counties benefit from some form of public transit. **The state's public transportation systems serve approximately 60 million passengers each year using more than 2,400 buses and vans.** Citizens are served by urban, urban regional, rural single-county, rural multicounty and consolidated urban-rural systems, including the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority that began operations July 1, 2008.

The Public Transportation Division is proud of its role in supporting the transportation systems that serve our citizens. **The better we serve, the better they serve.** Our work has never been more important because, in no small measure, North Carolina's future rides on transportation.

Miriam S. Perry

FY 2008 Public Transportation Division Budget State Funds

<i>Program Description</i>	<i>Approved Budget</i>
Statewide Grant Program	\$6,400,000
International Trade Show Transportation	\$1,200,000
Rural Programs	
Rural Capital Program (vehicles/technology/facility)	\$3,250,000
Rural Intercity Program	\$750,000
Rural General Public	\$6,500,000
Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Program	\$9,000,000
Human Services Transportation Management Program	\$2,700,000
Work First/Employment Transportation Program	\$1,500,000
Total Rural Programs	\$23,700,000
Urban Programs	
Urban and Regional Program (SMAP)	\$33,911,272
Urban/Regional Technology	\$1,600,000
Urban/Regional Bus and Facility Program	\$2,585,000
Total Urban Programs	\$38,096,272
New Starts Program	
Regional Transportation (New Starts Program)	\$4,070,175
Total	\$73,466,447

FY 2008 Financial Snapshot

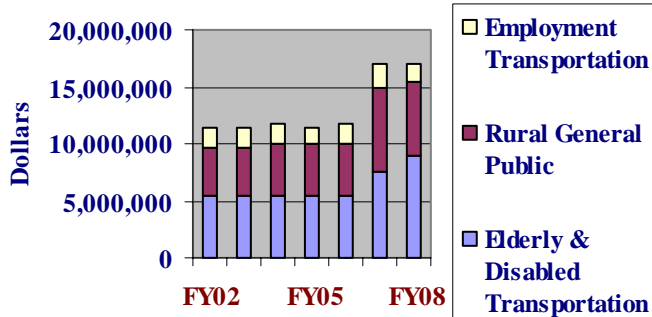
See graphs below and clockwise.

(1) During FY 2008, more than one-third of the Public Transportation Division's state budget went to rural programs.

(2) The division's FY 2008 state budget of \$73.4 million was down from an unusual high of \$163.4 million in FY 2004. Transit fund availability fluctuates according to special funding for New Starts and other unique projects from the Highway Trust Fund.

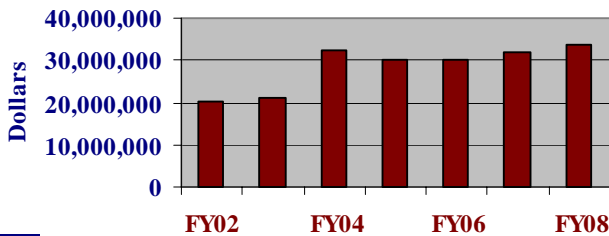
(3) Standing at \$33.9 million in FY 2008, funds for the State Maintenance Assistance Program, which assists urban systems, continue to grow, (4) as do funds for the Rural Operating Assistance Program with \$17 million.

Growth in the Rural Operating Assistance Program



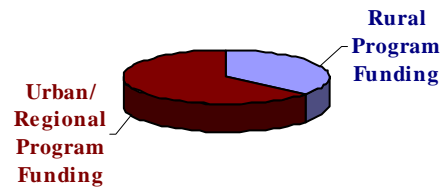
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Growth in the State Maintenance Assistance Program



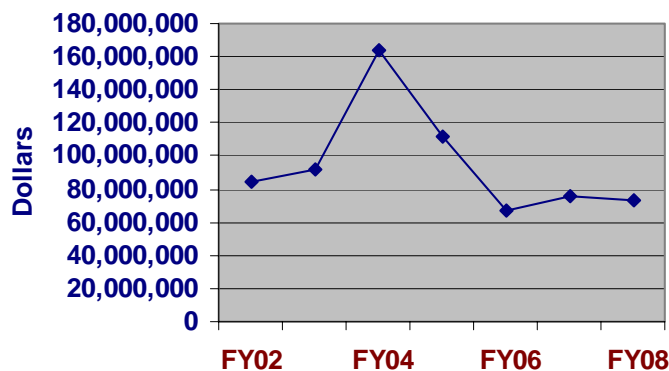
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Urban and Rural Programs FY08 State Funding



1

Total State Funding (FY02 - FY08)



2

Ridership Increasing

Motivated by high gas prices, more people chose to take public transportation in 2008. Almost 60 million passengers turned to transit in FY 2008, a 6 percent increase over FY 2007 figures.* A sampling of notable growth in ridership includes:

Urban

- The big news in North Carolina's urban transportation during FY 2008 was the introduction of the Lynx Blue Line, Charlotte's light rail system, in November 2007. The Lynx was projected to average 9,100 passenger trips on weekdays in its first year but quickly surpassed that number. Light rail and trolley alone served more than 2.2 million passengers in FY 2008, while fixed-route ridership held steady at approximately 19.9 million.*

Urban Regional

- June 2008 ridership for the **Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation** was up 54 percent over June 2007, and July 2008 was up 85.5 percent from July 2007 figures.
- During June 2008, **Triangle Transit's** bus and shuttle service recorded ridership of 97,172, an increase of 30.2 percent over June 2007.

Community

- **Orange (County) Public Transportation's** ridership grew more than 9 percent from 2006 to 2007 and another 3.5 percent from 2007 to 2008.* The growth is largely attributed to the Hillsborough-to-Chapel Hill public route, a coordinated effort between OPT and Triangle Transit, and two new public routes incorporating sheltered workshop clients, a coordinated effort between OPT and Orange Enterprises.
- Ridership for **Lenoir County Transit** increased more than 14 percent between FY 2007 and FY 2008.* The system experienced more demand for service from passengers needing transportation to work, school and medical appointments; from the general public and agency-sponsored clients; and from passengers with no other means of transportation and those who find Lenoir County's services are cheaper than a gallon of gas. As of March 10, 2008, Lenoir County Transit took over transit operations from a contractor and prides itself on excellent customer service.

*Preliminary, unaudited data

History Made with Charlotte's Light Rail

The LYNX Blue Line in Charlotte initiated light rail service to the public in November 2007 and was an immediate success. With average weekday ridership soon after it opened exceeding 14,000, the Blue Line was well above the projected 9,100 expected at the end of the first year of revenue operations.

The new system operates on the South Corridor, which is 9.6 miles long stretching from I-485 at South Boulevard to Uptown Charlotte. It includes 15 stations and seven park-and-ride locations. Trains operate seven days a week with weekday operations starting at 5:27 a.m. and ending at 1:26 a.m. Service is available every seven to eight minutes during weekday rush hours.

The success of the new light rail service has prompted the purchase of four additional light rail vehicles to meet current needs and reduce overcrowding.

NCDOT contributed more than \$115 million to the South Corridor project and has provided \$3.6 million in state match for grants to conduct planning and engineering studies for the Northeast Corridor that will extend the current rail line.

The South Corridor and the Northeast Corridor are two of the planned five corridors with multiple rapid transit improvements in the Metropolitan Transit Commission's 2030 Transit Corridor System Plan. Once complete, the system will consist of 25 miles of commuter rail, 21 miles of light rail, 16 miles of streetcar, 14 miles of bus rapid transit and an expanded network of buses and other transit services.



Greenway Becomes Newest Regional System

The counties of Alexander, Burke, Caldwell and Catawba along with the municipalities of Hickory, Newton and Conover have joined forces to form the Western Piedmont Regional Transit Authority. The authority is the first multicounty, regional public transportation authority and consolidated urban-rural transit system in the state.

The authority assumed operations of the rural and urban transit systems in the four-county region, collectively known as the “Unifour,” on July 1, 2008. The new transit system operates under the name of Greenway Public Transportation. Ed Clifford, who has more than 30 years of transit experience in Los Angeles and Orange County, California, is the new authority executive director. The regional transit authority, a separate public entity, consolidates the following four service providers:



Ed Clifford
Executive Director

- **Alexander County** – community transportation provided by Alexander County Transportation, a county-operated system
- **Burke County** – community transportation provided by Burke County Transit Administration Inc., a nonprofit agency
- **Caldwell County** - community transportation provided by Caldwell County Area Transit System Inc., a nonprofit agency
- **Catawba County** – Piedmont Wagon Transit System, operated by the city of Hickory, that provides community transportation to county residents and fixed-route service for the cities of Hickory, Newton and Conover

The journey toward consolidation started in 2001 when Caldwell County Area Transit System submitted an application to the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA) for U.S. Department of Agriculture funding. The request secured planning and technical assistance to consider consolidation.



Among the people making the new four-county regional transportation system a reality are (from left) Camille Sterling of Burke County Transit Administration Inc., Mike Bennett of Piedmont Wagon Transit System, Suzette Bradshaw of Caldwell County Area Transit System Inc., Patti Foster of Alexander County Transportation, John Tippet of Western Piedmont Council of Governments, and Mike Bradshaw of Caldwell County Area Transit System Inc.

RLS and Associates completed a feasibility study and issued a report in December 2004, providing a foundation for the development of a consolidated system. An implementation study by KFH Group followed with the Western Piedmont Council of Governments serving as facilitator.

A study committee, comprised of representatives from all four counties and the major municipalities, along with staff from NCDOT's Public Transportation Division, WPCOG and the KFH Group, met regularly and guided the progress of the successful regional transportation implementation plan.

New Facilities Lead to Better Service

Four public transportation systems celebrated the grand opening of new facilities during FY 2008, thanks in part to NCDOT funding. New facilities are now serving the rural transit systems in Madison, Avery and Clay counties in western North Carolina and the urban system in Chapel Hill.

Both Madison County and Avery County have long needed upgraded facilities but especially so after flood waters invaded the headquarters of each, though 70 miles apart, following hurricanes in 2004.

Madison County

Madison County Transportation Authority completed a 2,040-square-foot administrative/operations facility and celebrated its grand opening Sept. 13, 2007.

Architect Wayne Roberts of Asheville designed the facility, and Construction Logic of Hendersonville was the contractor. The total project cost of \$456,233 was 98 percent state-funded with the county providing the land, a 2.85-acre site in Marshall.



Madison County's Admin/Operations Facility

The transit system has three full-time staff members and 11 drivers, both full and part time.

Avery County

Avery County Transportation Authority, which had been operating out of a mobile trailer since the 2004 flood, completed construction on a 2,000-square-foot administrative/operations facility on a three-acre site in Newland. The ceremonial opening took place Oct. 12, 2007.



Avery County's Admin/Operations Facility

Beeson, Lusk and Street, Architects, of Johnson City, Tenn., designed the building that was constructed by WKM Construction. Total project cost was \$1.08 million, 90 percent state and 10 percent local.

The building has stone accents and a metal roof that will survive wind gusts of 100+ miles per hour.

Clay County

Clay County Transportation celebrated the grand opening of its 2,100-square-foot administrative/operations facility Sept. 18, 2008. Clay County made available the property, a two-acre site in Hayesville. The county used the value of the land, appraised at \$66,000 in February 2003, as in-kind match.



Clay County's Admin/Operations Facility

The design was developed by CE Tech Associates, P.A., of Franklin, and the building contractor was Wells and West Inc. of Murphy. Total cost was \$568,765 for the project that was completed in June 2008.

Chapel Hill

Chapel Hill's new Town Operations Center was dedicated Sept. 10, 2007. The facility, the largest capital project in Chapel Hill town government history, houses Chapel Hill Transit and the Public Works Department.

Planning for the project began after the town was required to leave its former site leased from UNC-Chapel Hill. Ground was broken in October 2004.

Cost of Chapel Hill Transit's portion of the shared complex was \$19.4 million. NCDOT provided N.C. Moving Ahead funds totaling \$7.3 million. The system also received funding assistance through the Federal Transit Administration.



Chapel Hill's Town Operations Center

Other Projects

Albemarle Regional Health Services, operating as **Inter-County Public Transportation Authority (ICPTA)** in Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Pasquotank and Perquimans counties, has built a new maintenance facility to serve its fleet of 27 vehicles. The facility, which is approximately 4,000 square feet, is adjacent to the system's administrative/operations center. Valued at \$561,500, it was designed by L.S. Agnew Jr., P.E., of Raleigh and constructed by John Bassett Inc. of Edenton.



ICPTA's Maintenance Facility



Durham Station Transportation Center

After completing a maintenance/operations facility in the spring of 2007, **Durham Area Transit Authority** broke ground Nov. 2, 2007, for its Durham Station Transportation Center, located near the Durham Bulls ballpark, the American Tobacco complex and West Village. The center promises to become a hub of transportation activity, linking services provided by city, Triangle Transit and Greyhound buses as well as Amtrak and taxis. The Freelon Group designed the facility; Balfour Beatty Construction is the contractor. The project, dedicated in February 2009, was made possible by a \$6.8 million federal earmark, \$4.45 million in N.C. Moving Ahead and other state transit funds.

Multimodal centers, such as the ones currently in operation in Durham, Greensboro, Winston-Salem and Rocky Mount, provide better customer service to the traveling public and better utilize federal, state and local resources. Other areas of the state are studying or developing multimodal centers, including Charlotte, Wilmington, Raleigh, Fayetteville and Greenville.

On Aug. 17, 2007, city and state officials announced plans to stabilize and preserve Union Station in downtown Goldsboro with the ultimate goal of having it become a multimodal center. Among others, the center would serve **GATEWAY**, the combined urban and community transportation system operating in Goldsboro and Wayne County.

As part of the improvement and expansion of North Carolina's passenger rail service across the state, the Rail Division, partnering with the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration and communities across the state, has embarked on the largest publicly funded historic rehabilitation program in North Carolina's history: the restoration and preservation of multiple passenger rail stations. Both Miriam Perry, director of the Public Transportation Division, and Patrick Simmons, director of the Rail Division, took part in the Union Station announcement.



Union Station - Goldsboro

First ‘Term Contract’ Buses Arrive

Buses ordered using the state’s first-ever term contract for transit buses began arriving in the spring of 2008. Capital Area Transit rolled out its 15 new buses April 2.

CAT was the first system in the state to take advantage of the new contract, placing its order just 14 days after the contract was awarded. Others systems followed: Triangle Transit, Durham Area Transit System, Fayetteville Area System of Transit, Concord/Kannapolis’ The Rider Transit System, Greenville Area Transit and Salisbury Transit System.



Capital Area Transit was the first system in the state to take advantage of the new term contract, won by Gillig Corporation for 40-foot heavy-duty, low-floor diesel buses. *(Photo courtesy of CAT)*

Working with the Division of Purchase and Contract with assistance from the Institute for Transportation Research and Education, the Public Transportation Division crafted the statewide term contract for buses, which was awarded March 22, 2007.

Term contracts allow buses most commonly purchased by transit systems throughout the state to be competitively bid to obtain lower prices through volume discounts. Gillig Corporation received the contract for 40-foot and 35-foot heavy-duty, 12-year, low-floor diesel buses. ElDorado National - California received the contract for 30-foot heavy-duty, 12-year and 35-foot and 31-foot medium-duty, 10-year, low-floor diesel buses.

The current statewide term contract is scheduled to expire Oct. 31, 2011.

State's First Rural Transportation Authority Celebrates 30th Anniversary

The Choanoke Public Transportation Authority marked 30 years of service to the citizens of Bertie, Hertford, Halifax and Northampton counties with an open house Nov. 8, 2007.

Miriam Perry, director of the Public Transportation Division, sent a letter congratulating CPTA on its milestone. "As the state's first rural transportation authority, CPTA is considered a trailblazer and its first two leaders, pioneers," the letter read. CPTA was organized on Nov. 7, 1977.

Addressed to executive director Pam Perry, the letter continued, "You and Wendell Edwards were there from the beginning. The two of you have given outstanding leadership and a stability that has seen CPTA increase its service from 12,000 passenger trips to more than 215,000 trips annually."

Over the three decades, CPTA has transported more than 4 million passengers.

Currently, the authority has 42 employees and a fleet of 60 vehicles. In March 2007, longtime employee Pam Perry became executive director after the retirement of Wendell Edwards, CPTA's first director.



Pam Perry (left), CPTA executive director, and Isadora Johnson, the authority's retired finance officer, reminisce during the 30th anniversary celebration.



Alternative Fuels for N.C. Transit Studied

A working group, formed in October 2007, was charged with the responsibility of developing strategies to encourage the use of alternative fuels by the state's transit systems.

The use of alternative fuel vehicles, particularly biodiesel and hybrid-electric vehicles, is increasing throughout the country.

Eighteen percent of North Carolina's urban transit fleet currently uses some form of alternative fuel. A survey revealed that five transit systems have a total of 124 vehicles powered by biodiesel. Several North Carolina transit systems are currently operating hybrid-electric vehicles and hybrid trolley buses and one is using compressed natural gas to power one of its buses.

In addition, Triangle Transit has been experimenting with biodiesel, and hybrids are on the horizon for several additional urban transit systems.

Alternative fuel technologies are attractive because they offer monetary savings from increased fuel costs, conservation of scarce petroleum supplies and reduced emissions/improved air quality.

The 12-member N.C. Transit Alternative Fuels Committee was made up of seven representatives from N.C. transit systems and one each from NCDOT's Public Transportation Division, N.C. Public Transportation Association, N.C. Solar Center, Institute for Transportation Research and Education and Clean Cities Coalition of the Land-of-Sky Regional Council.

The committee produced a report in June 2008 proposing that NCDOT consider programs or actions to subsidize or otherwise encourage the adoption and use of alternative fuels and vehicles.

‘History-Making’ Shuttle Aids Pedestrians During Lexington Bridge Replacement Project

History was made in FY 2008 when the Public Transportation Division and the Division of Highways collaborated on an NCDOT project. For the first time on record, a local transportation system assisted in a highway project.

It happened in Lexington, N.C., like this:

The bridge on East Center Street, located in an urban setting of housing, businesses, a restaurant, stores and churches, was slated to be replaced. The bridge, which spans high speed rail tracks used by 20 to 30 trains per day, is a gateway into the city. Plans called for the 11,000 vehicles that crossed the bridge each day to be detoured a distance of two miles, but what would happen to the pedestrian traffic that used the sidewalks on the existing bridge?

A team including NCDOT’s Work Zone Traffic Control Unit, Division 9, Construction Unit, Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch, Public Transportation Division, Contracts Unit as well as the Federal Highway Administration explored three options: Do nothing; build a temporary pedestrian bridge or provide a shuttle service through an agreement with the Davidson County Transportation Systems, operated by Davidson County.

A survey concluded that doing nothing was not feasible because of the number of pedestrians who needed the bridge, and a temporary bridge at an estimated \$100,000 was too costly. The Davidson County Transportation shuttle was the most cost-effective option.

From the start of the planning process, the endeavor had the wholehearted support of Miriam Perry, director of the Public Transportation



Davidson County Transportation Systems (van and shelter shown below) transported pedestrians whose path was blocked when the bridge on East Center Street in Lexington was being replaced.



Division. “We are excited about this project and are committed to making it a model for use across the state,” she said when the project was initiated.

Funded by NCDOT from Federal Highway Administration funds, the project began in November 2007. Davidson County Transportation Systems provided fixed-route and demand-response transportation service, replacing pedestrian traffic on the bridge. Service was available seven days a week between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.

The Public Transportation Division funded the necessary pedestrian shelters and signage. The shuttle, announced through a public awareness campaign, attracted an average of 264 passengers a month.

“It was a wonderful opportunity for transit to partner with the Division of Highways and illustrate the value of their service to the community,” said Public Transportation’s Perry.

Today pedestrians are walking across a wider and taller bridge on sidewalks with a “stamped” pattern, matching that on the city’s downtown streets. The \$2.2 million project was completed in early October 2008, in time to welcome the thousands of visitors arriving by vehicle or on foot for the 25th annual Lexington Barbecue Festival held later in the month.

TDM Program Promotes Travel Alternatives

The goal of transportation demand management is to focus on efforts to reduce demand for roadway space by influencing travel choices and the amount and timing of travel. TDM aims to encourage more walking, cycling, use of public transit, carpooling, vanpooling and telecommuting.

In 2004, NCDOT began providing funding to local TDM programs in urban areas, awarding 50 percent of their administrative costs. Prior to that time, the department gave similar support for the administration of vanpool programs in three metropolitan areas.

While each of North Carolina's programs has locally focused TDM activity, all promote:

- A **commuter challenge**, a campaign designed to increase general public awareness of alternate commuting options through aggressive marketing and employer site visits;
- **www.SharetheRideNC.org**, the statewide rideshare matching Web site;
- **Vanpool programs** in urban areas; and
- **Best Workplaces for Commuters**, a program of recognition for employers offering outstanding commuter benefits.

The Transportation Demand Management Program grew out of the Ambient Air Quality Improvement Act of 1999. The legislation directed NCDOT to develop a plan to reduce the growth of commuter vehicle miles traveled by 25 percent by July 1, 2009.

The Statewide Transportation Demand Management Plan was completed in April 2004. The plan was the culmination of work guided by a panel appointed by Gov. Mike Easley.

During FY 2008, seven TDM programs across North Carolina received state funds totaling \$1 million. Local funds provided a dollar-for-dollar match.

- **Asheville's Blue Ridge Commuter Connections** - \$63,752
- **Charlotte's Charlotte Area Transit System** - \$100,719
- **North Carolina State University's Transportation Department** - \$34,555
- **Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation** - \$205,046
- **Research Triangle Regional Public Transportation Authority (Triangle Transit)** - \$510,466
- **SmartCommute @ RTP** - \$66,020
- **University of North Carolina's Commuter Alternatives Program** - \$64,146

NCDOT On Target In Reducing VMT Growth

Legislation in 1999 directed the N.C. Department of Transportation to develop a plan to reduce the growth of commuter vehicle miles traveled by 25 percent by July 1, 2009. The department is required to report annually on progress toward the goal to the General Assembly.

According to the latest report, the growth of daily commuter VMT had been reduced by 24.6 percent since 2000 with all indications that the 25 percent target will be met on schedule.

Apprentice and Intern Programs

Train Next Generation of Transit Professionals

A total of \$73,910 in state funds was approved by the N.C. Board of Transportation to fund positions in the Apprentice and Intern Programs during FY 2008.

The Apprentice Program is intended for recent graduates or currently enrolled seniors at North Carolina colleges and universities, who will work full time for a 12-month period.

The Intern Program is aimed at students currently enrolled in graduate-level programs. Interns work approximately 12 weeks full time during the summer between their two years of graduate school and part time during the fall and spring semesters of their second year.

The Apprentice and Intern Programs help develop a pool of qualified individuals for the state's public transportation industry. Former apprentices and interns are currently employed at a number of North Carolina transit systems.

One intern and two apprentice positions were included in FY 2008 funding:

- **North Carolina State University** received \$15,234 to support the work of an intern with the NCSU Transportation Department. The intern conducted a transit rider customer service survey and completed other projects.
- **Durham Area Transit Authority** received \$31,026 to fund an apprentice position to work with DATA's public affairs unit.
- **Charlotte Area Transit System** received \$27,650 for an apprentice to work with CATS' operations division in assisting with the implementation of new bus services being provided as part of the light rail start-up activities.

Internship Provided Practical Experience

"Being an intern provided me with practical experience to build on the academic foundation I was getting at Carolina. I also developed relationships with many people in the profession that I have carried with me through the years. It was a great opportunity and it kept me from starving while I was in school."

*Tom Kendig, Director of Transportation,
N.C. State University*

*Intern with Yellow Cab of Raleigh and the
former Duke Power Transit in Greensboro and
Durham, while in graduate school at UNC-
Chapel Hill in the Department of City and
Regional Planning, concentrating in
transportation*

Training Reaches Hundreds

The Public Transportation Division supports a wide variety of safety and security training available to employees of North Carolina transit agencies. Training is conducted by NCDOT staff as well as by transit-related agencies, including the Federal Transit Administration, the Transportation Safety Institute, the National Transit Institute and the Institute for Transportation Research and Education. Much of the training is available at no cost.

Thirty-five training sessions covering 11 topics were held across the state during FY 2008, attracting 1,339 participants. Training topics were:

- Braun Lift (Mechanical) Training
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprises
- Fundamental Financial Management
- Infectious Disease – Bloodborne Pathogens
- Orientation to Procurement (several categories)
- Reasonable Suspicion – Drug and Alcohol Training
- Securing Community Mobility
- Sure-lok Wheelchair Securement
- Tool Box for Operator Fatigue
- Transit 101
- Workplace Violence

Drug/Alcohol Testing Ensures Compliance

The Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991 requires drug and alcohol testing of safety-sensitive transportation employees in mass transit and other transportation industries that receive funds from the Federal Transit Administration. Transit agencies are required to implement a drug and alcohol program with the goal of achieving a drug-free and alcohol-free workforce in the interest of the health and safety of transit employees and the traveling public.

States certify regulatory compliance on behalf of the transit systems that receive FTA funding through a state agency, specifically community transportation systems in North Carolina. Certification of compliance by North Carolina systems is a function of the Safety and Training Unit.

Since 2006, 39 of the 44 transit systems visited have been certified as compliant, representing a compliance rate of 88.6 percent. Program guidelines call for all of the state's 82 community transportation systems to receive certification visits at least once every three years.

Reviews Promote Safety

The Safety and Training Unit is responsible for conducting safety reviews of community transportation systems and monitoring the implementation of review recommendations. During FY 2008, visits were initiated at 22 systems with reports closed at eight systems. Reviews at eight additional systems were put on hold while the division works to redesign the review process to make it more efficient and to work with systems to update existing System Safety Program Plans.

Subject to examination during the review are the approved safety plan, trends in the transit system's accident/incident reports, drug and alcohol testing compliance history and the record of training provided by the system. Prior to on-site visits, safety and training specialists routinely consult with appropriate division staff to discern any outstanding issues or concerns.

During FY 2008, the unit produced two reference documents, "Common Findings from Completed System Safety Reviews" and "Best Practices." Both documents are on the division's Web site.

The safety reviews were endorsed by the N.C. Board of Transportation, which passed a Resolution for Approval in 2003 for community transportation systems to implement System Safety Program Plans. The board's resolution was based upon the Memorandum of Understanding among the Federal Transit Administration, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the American Public Transportation Association and the Community Transportation Association of America.

Each rural transit system in the state that receives federal and/or state funds is required to have an approved System Safety Program Plan in an effort to promote safe public transportation services.

The Safety and Training Unit consists of a program manager and four safety and training specialists, two specializing in conducting safety reviews, one serving as training coordinator and one handling drug and alcohol compliance.

Award-Winning CARTS: Safety Audit 'Put Us Over the Top'

The Craven Area Rural Transit System won honors at the annual Craven County Employee Awards Banquet on April 26, 2008, when it was named first recipient of the Safety Star Department of the Year Award.

The award was given based on annual safety audits and fire drill results, monthly safety training records, most improved safety record, highest percentage of staff without reportable incidents, degree of risk for department, overall commitment to safety, and completeness and timeliness of reporting incidents. Bonus points were given for employees receiving "Safety Spotlight."

During the presentation, CARTS was praised for never missing monthly safety training, offering staff internal safety competitions to keep safety in the forefront, promoting safety locally and statewide, and reporting no injuries for 2007.

Phyllis Toler, CARTS director, credits the Public Transportation Division's Safety and Training Unit for helping to make the award possible.

"The NCDOT/PTD safety audit and results helped to put us over the top," Toler said.

ITRE Assists with FY 2008 Projects and Activities

N.C. State University's Institute for Transportation Research and Education assisted the Public Transportation Division with several projects and activities during FY 2008, including:

Benchmarking Process – As recommended in the *Benchmarking for North Carolina Transit Systems* study, a benchmarking process for North Carolina transit systems is being developed. The recommended benchmarking process uses a “scoring” approach based on comparative performance among peers and incorporates remediation strategies for those transit systems that may not achieve a passing score. The project, which is in preliminary stages with discussions and planning, will increase accountability and lead to a more effective and efficient allocation of scarce state and federal funds to operate local transit services.

Standardized Customer Satisfaction Survey – Public transportation systems are realizing the importance of using market and customer satisfaction research if they are to attract and retain passengers. Such information can be valuable in improving current transit services as well as in planning new services and programs. ITRE staff developed two survey instruments: one for fixed-route services that can be adapted for commuter/express services and one for demand-response services, both urban systems providing Americans with Disabilities Act paratransit service and rural community transportation systems serving clients of human service agencies and the general public. A project report describes a recommended process for administering and evaluating the surveys.

Intercity Bus Program Assessment – The Public Transportation Division is charged with allocating FTA Section 5311(f) program funds to support intercity bus service in North Carolina. In an effort for more effective and efficient allocation of funds, six potential intercity bus routes were assessed for feasibility. Results will allow the division to make more informed decisions and to fund service alternatives that are most likely to provide the highest return on investment.

Transportation Demand Management – As part of the requirements of the Ambient Air Quality Improvement Act of 1999, ITRE has assisted the division with transportation demand management activities for several years through a contract with Parsons Brinkerhoff. Activities this fiscal year included: technical support; transition planning for Best Workplaces for Commuters activities in the absence of EPA sponsorship; hands-on support and work plan reviews for the TDM programs in Asheville, Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation, Wilmington, Triangle Transit / Triangle J Council of Governments and Charlotte; and statewide education efforts through meetings and information distribution.

Technology Implementation – ITRE has assisted the Public Transportation Division with technical assistance, professional development and technology implementation since 1994 and will continue the efforts to improve outcomes by focusing on training, planning, operations support and technology implementation. Specific tasks include providing operations support/expertise and planning assistance; building skills and sharing knowledge; developing tools to do business more efficiently; facilitating or conducting training, workshops, user group activities and seminars that improve skill sets and knowledge of transit professionals; assisting with planning activities; collecting and analyzing vehicle utilization data; and preparing specifications and implementing technologies and software. Major milestones during FY 2008 included continued support for:

- ***TriP_Maker installations in North Carolina and release of TriP_Maker 4.0.*** TriP_Maker is a database application developed by ITRE for the North Carolina paratransit systems (urban and rural).

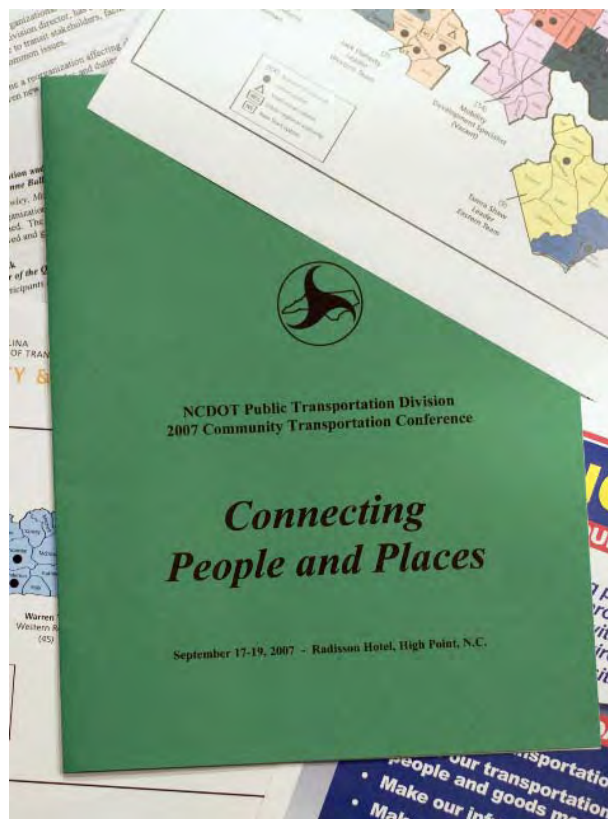
Its primary functions include organization of data, client tracking and agency billing. Systems serving the following counties currently use TriP_Maker: Alexander, Alleghany, Brunswick, Catawba, Harnett, Lee, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, Montgomery, Person, Randolph, Rockingham, Rutherford and Transylvania.

- ***Users of RouteMatch software.*** New county system installations this fiscal year are for Cabarrus, Catawba and Gaston, and support continued for Choanoke Public Transportation Authority and Iredell County. Preliminary planning is under way for regional systems, Craven Area Rural Transportation System, Kerr Area Transportation Authority and Western Piedmont Regional Transportation Authority, and for individual systems, Alamance County Transportation Authority, Buncombe County / Mountain Mobility, Carteret County Area Transportation System, Davidson County Transportation, Duplin County Transportation, Goldsboro-Wayne Transportation Authority, Moore County Transportation, Onslow United Transportation, Union County Transportation, Wake Coordinated Transportation Services and Wilkes Transportation Authority.
- ***Transit systems using Trapeze as their paratransit application.*** Systems using Trapeze are Chapel Hill Transit, Durham Area Transit Authority, Greensboro Transit Authority, Guilford County Transportation and Mobility Services, High Point Transit System, Raleigh's Capital Area Transit, Triangle Transit and Winston-Salem Transit Authority.
- ***Users of Maximus maintenance software.***

Community Transportation Conference Features Daylong Exercise to Enhance Skills

“Connecting People and Places” was the theme of the 2007 Community Transportation Conference, which met Sept. 17-19, 2007, at the Radisson Hotel in High Point. Approximately 150 representatives from community transportation systems gathered for the annual conference, sponsored by the Public Transportation Division.

Following the conference’s role as teacher/trainer, a daylong exercise drew on the knowledge and experience of attendees to identify ways to increase general public ridership, improve system efficiency and create additional mobility options in communities of selected transit systems. In a unique case study approach, teams used profiles of actual, but unidentified, North Carolina systems, including budgets, fleet descriptions, rolling stock inventories, vehicle utilization data, customer information, census data and maps. They attended a plenary session on integration of rural general public and human service transportation into a “family of services” followed by concurrent sessions offering specifics about the core issues of rural general public transportation service delivery. In small-group settings, participants analyzed the assigned community’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, then crafted a plan for improving its transportation services and shared their findings.



The case-study exercise was well received, according to conference feedback, eliciting such comments as “Exercise was good and involved participation and teamwork” and “The exercise was an attention getter. Gives me an idea of what DOT is looking for and at.”

Among other conference topics were veterans’ health care transportation, coordinated planning process and competitive grants, NCDOT initiatives, performance and budgeting, planning an emergency response and best practices in safety, financial management, regionalization, service funded by the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program and service coordination.

Featured speakers included NCDOT Deputy Secretary for Transit Roberto Canales, Dr. Cassandra Atkinson of N.C. Central University, Jamie Pfister of the Federal Transit Administration/Region IV and Deputy Director Mike Sprayberry of the N.C. Emergency Management Division. Miriam Perry, PTD director, and many division staff members were either on the program and/or worked behind the scenes to make the conference possible.

N.C. Public Transportation Association Celebrates 25th Anniversary at Conference

The N.C. Public Transportation Association celebrated its 25th anniversary at the organization's annual conference June 2-4, 2008, at the Hilton Wilmington Riverside in Wilmington. As with previous conferences, Public Transportation Division staff members assisted in conference planning and execution.

Miriam Perry, division director, was a member of the conference planning committee. Several division employees led roundtable discussions. NCDOT Deputy Secretary for Transit Roberto Canales spoke during the opening session along with Dr. Yvette Taylor, Federal Transit Administration Region IV administrator.



Pausing between sessions at the 2008 N.C. Public Transportation Association Conference are (from left) NCDOT Deputy Secretary for Transit Roberto Canales; Dr. Yvette Taylor, FTA Region IV administrator; and Chris Turner, NCPTA president.

The 2008 Governor's Public Transportation Award was presented during the conference to Brent McKinney, executive director of the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation. The award, first given in 1988, is presented annually by NCDOT's Public Transportation Division for outstanding service in public transportation. McKinney was praised for working "tirelessly to convince decision makers that creation of a regional transit authority was the right thing to do" and convincing the leadership in area counties to join and provide financial support for new services.

Governor's Award Recipients

2008	Brent McKinney, Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation
2007	Ronald J. Tober, Charlotte Area Transit System
2006	David D. King, NCDOT
2005	Mary Clayton, Parsons Brinkerhoff
2004	Scott McClellan, Capital Area Transit (management company)
2003	John Tippet, Western Carolina Council of Governments
2002	David Eatman, Rocky Mount/Nash-Edgecombe Public Transportation System
2001	Fred Fontana, Guilford County
2000	Debbie Collins, Institute for Transportation Research and Education, NCSU
1999	Dorothy Schmit, Kerr Area Rural Transportation System
1998	Denise Braine, Mountain Mobility (Buncombe County)
1997	Gwen Hinson, Stanly County
1996	Chris Turner, AppalCART
1995	David Morris, Winston-Salem Transit Authority
1994	Mark Ahrendsen, City of Durham, Department of Transportation
1993	Jerome Brown, Fayetteville Area System of Transit
1992	John Eaton, CTS Management Company
1991	Buddy Cox, High Point Transit System
1990	Bob Godding, Chapel Hill Transit
1989	Ann Dowell, Yadkin Valley Public Transportation
1988	Wendell Edwards, Choanoke Public Transportation Authority



Miriam Perry and Brent McKinney

The 2008 Roadeo, jointly sponsored by the association and the division, was held immediately before the conference, May 31-June 1, at the Wilmington International Airport. Richard Jones and Warren Troy, who served as members of the Roadeo planning committee, and other PTD employees assisted onsite during the competition as the best public transit drivers from across North Carolina tested their skills in the areas of driving, wheelchair boarding and securement, pre-trip inspection and a written test. Participants competed in three divisions: bus, light transit vehicle and van. Winners were announced at the awards luncheon on June 1.

2008 Roadeo Winners

Bus Category

- 1st Place – Lonny Earnhardt, Charlotte Area Transit System
- 2nd Place – Junior Bush, Charlotte Area Transit System
- 3rd Place – Larry Villines, Triangle Transit
- System with Highest Score – Charlotte Area Transit System

Light Transit Vehicle Category

- 1st Place – Henry Minnet, Charlotte Area Transit System
- 2nd Place – Nathaniel Love, Greensboro Transit System
- 3rd Place – Robin Dillon, Greensboro Transit System
- System with Highest Score – Charlotte Area Transit System

Van Category

- 1st Place – Robin Dillon, Greensboro Transit Authority
- 2nd Place – Nathan Curry, Gaston County
- 3rd Place – Travis Parker, Chapel Hill Transit
- System with Highest Score – Duke Transit

NCDOT Public Transportation Division Staff

Director - Miriam S. Perry

Administrative Assistant - Faye T. McCullen

Information and Communications Specialist - Mary Jo Cashion

Assistant Director for Facilities and New Starts - Michael A. Kozak

Transportation Program Consultant - Nancy L. Painter

Transportation Planner - *Vacant*

Assistant Director for Mobility Development - Denese D. Lavender

Planner – *Vacant*

Transportation Program Consultant – *Vacant*

Regional Team Leader for Western North Carolina - John J. (Jack) Flaherty

Mobility Development Specialists - Richard T. (Tom) Herman, Patricia P. Perry

Regional Team Leader for Central North Carolina - William (Bill) R. Barlow

Mobility Development Specialists - David P. Bender, Pamela M. Hawley, Terry Jordan

Regional Team Leader for Eastern North Carolina - Tamra H. Shaw

Mobility Development Specialists - Herbert A. (Jeff) Crouchley, Tori Smith

Assistant Director for Administrative Services - Linda A. Wallace

Financial Management Unit

Financial Manager - Charlie C. Wright

Accountant - *Vacant*

Accounting Specialists - Annette R. Hicks, Myra King, Myakka Ware

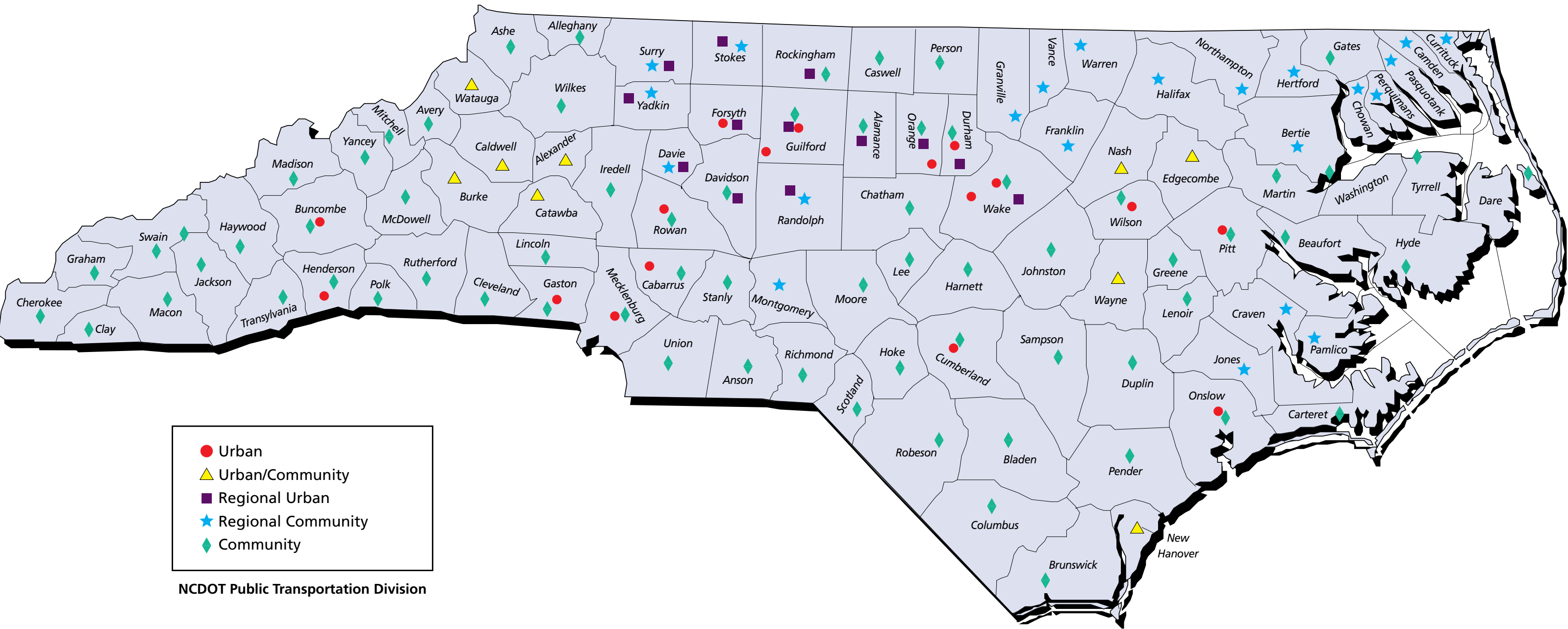
Funds Coordinator - *Vacant*

Safety and Training Unit

Program Manager – Richard R. Jones

Safety and Training Specialists - Henry L. Staten, 2 *Vacant Positions*

Public Transportation Services in North Carolina



Urban Systems

Asheville – Asheville Transit System
Cary – C-Tran
Chapel Hill – Chapel Hill Transit
Charlotte – Charlotte Area Transit System
Concord/Kannapolis – The Rider Transit System
Durham – Durham Area Transit Authority
Fayetteville – Fayetteville Area System of Transit
Gastonia – Gastonia Transit
Goldsboro – GATEWAY
Greensboro – Greensboro Transit Authority
Greenville – Greenville Area Transit (GREAT)
Hendersonville – Apple Country Transit
Hickory – Greenway Public Transportation
High Point – High Point Transit System (Hi Tran)
Jacksonville – Jacksonville Transit
Raleigh – Capital Area Transit
Rocky Mount – Tar River Transit
Wilmington – Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority/Wave Transit
Winston-Salem – Winston-Salem Transit Authority

Small Urban Systems

Boone – AppalCART
Salisbury – Salisbury Transit System
Wilson – Wilson Transit

Urban Regional Systems

Triad – Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation
Triangle – Triangle Transit

Community Systems

Alamance – Alamance County Transportation Authority
Alexander – Greenway Public Transportation
Alleghany – Alleghany in Motion
Anson – Anson County Transportation System

Ashe – Ashe County Transportation Authority
Avery – Avery County Transportation Authority
Beaufort – Beaufort Area Transit System
Bertie – Choanoke Public Transportation Authority
Bladen – Bladen Area Rural Transportation System
Brunswick – Brunswick Transit System
Buncombe – Mountain Mobility
Burke – Greenway Public Transportation
Cabarrus – Cabarrus County Transportation Services
Caldwell – Greenway Public Transportation
Camden – Inter-County Public Transportation Authority
Carteret – Carteret County Area Transportation System
Caswell – Caswell Division of Transportation
Catawba – Greenway Public Transportation
Chatham – Chatham Transit Network
Cherokee – Cherokee County Transit
Chowan – Inter-County Public Transportation Authority
Clay – Clay County Transportation
Cleveland – Transportation Administration of Cleveland County
Columbus – Columbus County Transportation
Craven – Craven Area Rural Transit System
Cumberland – Cumberland County Transportation System
Currituck – Inter-County Public Transportation Authority
Dare – Dare County Transportation System
Davidson – Davidson County Transportation System
Davie – Yadkin Valley Public Transportation
Duplin – Duplin County Transportation Department
Durham – Durham County Access
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians – EBCI Public Transit
Edgecombe – Tar River Transit
Forsyth – Trans-AID of Forsyth County
Franklin – Kerr Area Rural Transportation System

Gaston – Gaston County ACCESS
Gates – Gates County Inter-Regional Transportation System
Graham – Graham County Transit Service
Granville – Kerr Area Rural Transportation System
Greene – Greene County Transportation
Guilford – Guilford County Transportation Department
Halifax – Choanoke Public Transportation Authority
Harnett – Harnett Area Rural Transit System
Haywood – Haywood Public Transit
Henderson – Apple Country Transportation
Hertford – Choanoke Public Transportation Authority
Hoke – Hoke Area Transit Services
Hyde – Hyde County Transit
Iredell – Iredell County Area Transit System
Jackson – Jackson County Transit
Johnston – Johnston County Area Transit System
Jones – Craven Area Rural Transit System
Lee – County of Lee Transit System
Lenoir – Lenoir County Transportation
Lincoln – Transportation Lincoln County
Macon – Macon County Transit
Madison – Madison County Transportation Authority
Martin – Martin County Transit
McDowell – McDowell Transit
Mecklenburg – Mecklenburg County Transportation
Mitchell – Mitchell County Transportation Authority
Montgomery – Regional Coordinated Area Transportation System
Moore – Moore County Transportation Services
Nash – Tar River Transit
New Hanover – Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority/Wave Transit
Northampton – Choanoke Public Transportation Authority
Onslow – Onslow United Transit System
Orange – Orange Public Transportation

Pamlico – Craven Area Rural Transit System
Pasquotank – Inter-County Public Transportation Authority
Pender – PASTRAN
Perquimans – Inter-County Public Transportation Authority
Person – Person Area Transportation System
Pitt – Pitt Area Transit System Inc.
Polk – Polk County Transportation Authority
Randolph – Regional Coordinated Area Transportation System
Richmond – Area of Richmond Transit
Robeson – South East Area Transit System
Rockingham – Rockingham Public Access Transportation
Rowan – Rowan Transit System
Rutherford – Rutherford County Transit
Sampson – Sampson Area Transit
Scotland – Scotland County Area Transit
Stanly – Stanly County Transportation
Stokes – Yadkin Valley Public Transportation
Surry – Yadkin Valley Public Transportation
Swain – Swain Public Transit
Transylvania – TRANSPORT
Tyrrell – Tyrrell County Senior and Disabled Transportation System
Union – Union County Transportation
Vance – Kerr Area Rural Transportation System
Wake – Wake Coordinated Transportation Services
Warren – Kerr Area Rural Transportation System
Washington – Riverlight Transit
Watauga – AppalCART
Wayne – GATEWAY
Wilkes – Wilkes Transportation Authority
Wilson – Wilson County Transportation Services
Yadkin – Yadkin Valley Public Transportation
Yancey – Yancey County Transportation Authority

As of July 1, 2008



North Carolina Department of Transportation
Public Transportation Division
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